MIRRORS: Sangeeta Teresa Mai in Concert

with

Trinh Hoang Hai – host
Nicolas Neidhardt – musical director & keyboards
Hoang Nguyen – piano
Bao Thi Nguyen – violin
Cedric Leonardi – drums & percussion
Mark Gorman – bass
Eru Matsumoto – cellist
Roberto Gomez – baritone
Hila Plitmann – soprano
Dat Nguyen – guitarist
Belinda Gonzalez – soprano

Danae Vlasse – composer
Duy Tran – assistant production manager

Out of courtesy to the artists and your fellow patrons, please take a moment to turn off and refrain from using cellular phones, pagers, watch alarms and similar devices. The use of any audio or videorecording device or the taking of photographs (with or without flash) is strictly prohibited. Thank you.
Program

**SANGEETA TERESA MAI**
- *This Beautiful World*
  - Sangeeta Teresa Mai, soprano

**SANGEETA TERESA MAI**
- *Ascension*
  - Sangeeta Teresa Mai, soprano

**GEORG FRIDERIC HANDEL**
Arr. NICOLAS NEIDHARDT
- *Lascia Ch’io Pianga from Rinaldo*
  - Sangeeta Teresa Mai, soprano

**MITCH LEIGH / JOE DARION**
Arr. NICOLAS NEIDHARDT
- *The Impossible Dream from Man of La Mancha*
  - Roberto Perlas Gomez, baritone

**Piano Trio**
- *O Mio Babbino Caro from Gianni Schicchi*
  - Belinda Gonzalez, soprano

**GIACOMO PUCCINI / GIOVACCHINO FORZANO**
Arr. NICOLAS NEIDHARDT
- *Adoro Te Devote*
  - Sangeeta Teresa Mai, soprano • Roberto Perlas Gomez, baritone

**13TH CENTURY / Words ST. THOMAS AQUINAS**
Music Arr. NICOLAS NEIDHARDT
Chorus Arr. DUY TRAN
- *Samsara’s Tango*
  - Sangeeta Teresa Mai, soprano • Hoang Nguyen, piano • Eru Matsumoto, cello

**SANGEETA TERESA MAI / VAN ANH NGUYEN / MARK OLSEN**
- *Deum De Deo*
  - Sangeeta Teresa Mai, soprano • Roberto Perlas Gomez, baritone

—INTERMISSION—

**SANGEETA TERESA MAI**
- *Bring It Down*
  - Sangeeta Teresa Mai, soprano • Nicolas Neidhardt, piano

**DANNY ELFMAN**
Arr. HILA PLITMANN
- *Sally’s Song from The Nightmare Before Christmas*
  - Hila Plitmann, soprano • Eru Matsumoto, cello • Bao Thi Nguyen, violin

**DANAE VLASSE**
- *Serenade II*
  - Sangeeta Teresa Mai, soprano • Hila Plitmann, soprano • Hoang Nguyen, piano • Eru Matsumoto, cello

**VAN CAO**
Arr. NGUYEN KHANH HONG
- *Ben Xuan*
  - Sangeeta Teresa Mai, soprano • Hoang Nguyen, piano • Eru Matsumoto, cello • Bao Thi Nguyen, violin

**ANTONIO VIVALDI**
Arr. ERU MATSUMOTO
- *Storm from The Four Seasons*
  - Eru Matsumoto, cello

**ENNIO MORRICONE / CHIARA FERRAU**
Arr. NICOLAS NEIDHARDT
- *Nella Fantasia from the film The Mission*
  - Sangeeta Teresa Mai, soprano • Roberto Perlas Gomez, baritone

**KANSAS**
Arr. SANGEETA TERESA MAI, NICOLAS NEIDHARDT & DAT NGUYEN
- *Dust in the Wind*
  - Sangeeta Teresa Mai, soprano • Nicolas Neidhardt, piano • Dat Nguyen, guitar

**SANGEETA TERESA MAI**
- *I'm Not Gonna Break*
  - Sangeeta Teresa Mai, soprano

**SANGEETA TERESA MAI**
- *Ardas Bhaee*
  - Sangeeta Teresa Mai, soprano • Roberto Perlas Gomez, baritone
About the Artists

Sangeeta Teresa Mai  Trinh Hoang Hai  Nicolas Neidhardt  Hoang Nguyen

Bao Thi Nguyen  Cedric Leonardi  Mark Gorman  Eru Matsumoto

Roberto Gomez  Hila Plitmann  Dat Nguyen  Belinda Gonzalez

Danae Vlasse  Duy Tran
SANGEETA TERESA MAI (vocalist)
Sangeeta Kaur (aka Teresa Mai) is a Vietnamese American award-winning new age/classical crossover opera singer, mantra singer, song-writer and producer.

She has earned a bachelor of music degree in opera performance from California State University of Long Beach (currently known as Bob Cole Conservatory of Music) and a masters degree in vocal performance from The Boston Conservatory of Music.

Sangeeta performs internationally, a unique blend of classical crossover and sacred music. She has performed in venues such as MUSCO Performing Arts Center, Sydney Opera House, Melbourne Recital Hall, the Broad Stage and others. This will be her third appearance at Segerstrom Center for the Arts.

For the last 10 years, Sangeeta has been studying and practicing Tibetan Buddhism, Kundalini yoga, yoga of Lady Niguma and the yoga of sound and mantra. With her studies in ancient wisdom and classical music, she fuses together both of these worlds into her music and productions, bringing to the stage a new, fresh and transformative element.

With her producer, Nicolas Neidhardt, Sangeeta recorded and released two new age/classical crossover music albums: Niguma Vol. 1 (2016) and Ascension, Niguma Vol. 2 (2017). Her third album titled, MIRRORS was released on September 21, 2018. Sangeeta is the creator and producer of the new musical production, Niguma, The Mantra Project, a powerful and ancient story told through songs from her previous two albums, modern classical dance and visual arts. Niguma, The Mantra Project premiered at The Broad Stage in Santa Monica, California in November of 2016.

Sangeeta is the founder of Empower With Art Productions, a non-profit organization and production company that is dedicated to bringing to the stage, new and transformative musical productions that have positive impact on the world. Sangeeta is also a Kundalini yoga and meditation teacher. She runs a not-for-profit community center called Sat Nam Yoga in Westminster, California.

TRINH HOANG HAI (host)
Trinh Hoang Hai is a self-taught classical guitarist, classically trained singer, former CEO of one of the largest oil companies in Vietnam, and a supporter of the arts. He believes that music is a tool which bridges and connects the souls of people.

Hoang Hai founded a music series called A Night of Music, where he gives the opportunity for emerging young talented Vietnamese international artists and musicians to perform in some of the most prestigious theaters and venues in the world. He also believes in supporting the artistic and musical education for those with exceptional talent and ambition. As an artist and performer himself he expresses music through his unique musical interpretation of both classical guitar and voice in his performances.

Hoang Hai has performed at numerous venues as a soloist and a choir member. He has recorded two albums, Bien Hat and Bien Oi, which were very well received. Hoang Hai is a part of a musical group that not only consists of talented musicians but also successful businessmen who want to share their knowledge through music and give back to their communities. They have successfully raised funds for many charity programs, providing support and encouragement to many young talented students at various universities.

NICOLAS NEIDHARDT (musical director & keyboards)
Nicolas Neidhardt is a German and French composer based in Los Angeles. Born in Germany, he moved to Paris when he was 20 to study classical piano with world-famous concert pianist Françoise Buffet and jazz at the CIM in Paris. But it was his passion for synthesizers that opened the doors of the Parisian Recording Studios in the mid-’80s, where he found himself next door to Prince, Tina Turner and The Eurythmics.

He then joined the house band of the very popular talk show Nulle Part Ailleurs and performed with artists such as Seal, Tom Jones, Nina Hagen and many others.

Already a busy composer, he wrote his first No. 1 hit, “Dieu m’a donné la foi,” in 1996, became one of France’s top record producers and contributed to some of the best-selling records in Europe. As he felt a growing passion for music of pictures, he scored seven seasons of the very successful crime show, “La Crim,” as well as many commercials and documentaries. His first feature film credits include Audrey Tautou’s first success, Venus Beauty Institute, Absolument fabuleux, and Titeuf, le film.

Also an accomplished pianist, after performing at Webster Hall in New York City in 2010, his work has been published alongside compositions by Phillip Glass, Ludovico Einaudi and Ryuichi Sakamoto.

In 2012 he moved to Los Angeles and started to write for Hollywood blockbusters such as Killer Elite (Robert de Niro, Clive Owen, Jason Statham), Unknown (Liam Neesen, Diane Krueger), and Last Knights (Morgan Freeman, Clive Owen).

Recently he’s been very successful composing trailers for San Andreas, Wonder Woman, Blade Runner 2049 and Jurassic World, Fallen Kingdom.

HOANG NGUYEN (piano)
Hoang H. Nguyen enjoys a musical career as a classical performing artist, jazz musician, and college professor in Southern California.

Born in Hanoi, Vietnam, he made his orchestral debut as soloist at the age 13 with the Vietnam National Symphony Orchestra. Nguyen received degrees from Hanoi Conservatory (Vietnam), Versailles and Paris Conservatories (France), Indiana University, and Cal State Fullerton and is currently a doctoral of musical arts candidate at Claremont Graduate University. He has given numerous concerts both solo and with orchestras in France, Italy, Poland, Switzerland, Vietnam, and the United States.

Nguyen is devoted to his art in order to make a contribution to the musical community. He is a pianist for Ngan Khoi Chorus as well as performing live for Thuy Nga Production’s Paris by Night. He was the special musical guest to perform at the gala celebrating Cal State Fullerton’s 50th anniversary. Nguyen was recently appointed as director of Musicians Affiliation of Vietnamese American Society for Creative Arts and Music (www.vascam.org), a national not-for-profit society to cultivate, nurture, and promote creative arts and music by Vietnamese Americans.

As a jazz musician, he studied with Grammy®-winning pianist Bill Cunliffe and has appeared at Steamers in Fullerton and
CEDRIC LEONARDI (drums/percussion)
Cedric Leonardi, drummer, percussionist and a true living gypsy, has spent an entire lifetime following the trail of rhythm. Thanks to an incredible mother who bought him his first drum kit at the age of 12, allowing him to practice daily in their two-bedroom apartment, the world was gifted with an incredibly talented artist and musician.

Cedric’s love and passion for music took him all around the world to perform in many countries including Cuba, South America and India. This then led him to join the Gypsy Kings. Growing up and drumming with the Gypsy Kings had a huge impact on his music career as well as his musical expression. This experience also brought Cedric to the United States, where he would meet his beloved Australian wife and partner.

Even moving to the U.S., Cedric did not abandon his gypsy roots. He embarked on a journey to return to the magnificent Catalan Rumba, the birthplace of all gypsy cultures, Rajasthan, India.

His new project with his band will launch in 2019 with an album, documentary and a world tour. A lover of the sacred sound current and how it is expressed through Sangeeta Kaur’s music and voice brings him great pleasure and joy to join her in this concert.

MARK GORMAN (bass)
Mark Gorman honed his bass skills in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, playing with the likes of Robert Hazard (RCA recording artist and writer of “Girls Just Wanna Have Fun”) and as a founding member of Sire Records’ Martin’s Dam. Upon relocating to Los Angeles, Mark hit the ground running, finding his niche in the world of mantra as bass player for Grammy-nominated Sanskrit chanting artist Krishna Das, while also writing music for film & TV. Mark has performed or recorded with legends Jackson Browne, Jeff Bridges, Peter Himmelman, Trevor Hall, Julia Fordham, Ice-T, Jai Uttal, Jerry Marotta (Peter Gabriel), Steve Ferrone (Tom Petty) and John Densmore (The Doors), among others. As an L.A. session player, Mark continues to explore new musical avenues in multiple genres, from alternative to ambient & roots to rock.

ERU MATSUMOTO (cello)
Eru Matsumoto is recognized as one of the world’s leading and most versatile cellists of her generation. Her blossoming career has been filled with major performances including a recent solo performance with the Tokyo Philharmonic Orchestra premiering the music of legendary composer John Williams, and collaborations with major recording artists Adele and Demi Lovato, for which she received a Grammy Award nomination. Matsumoto is also known as a spokesperson of her generation, recently giving a TEDx talk in London, invited to give a keynote presentation at Lawrence University and a lecture at Harvard University. She is also a musical director and collaborator for STEAM at Harvard.

Matsumoto is a member of the International High IQ Society, and at age 16 was accepted by the Juilliard School in New York City, under the tutelage of the late David Soyer. Her long-term instructors have also included Andrew Shulman and Yehuda Hanani.

Matsumoto has performed with symphonies all over the world including the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra in London, Tokyo Philharmonic Orchestra in Tokyo, the Hawaii Symphony in Honolulu, Shanghai Philharmonic Orchestra in Shanghai, the Dusseldorfer Symphoniker, and the New York City Ballet, among many other venerable institutions. She has also regularly performed as guest soloist at celebrated venues such as Avery Fisher Hall, Lincoln Center, Carnegie Hall, Walt Disney Concert Hall, Wembley Arena, Mitsubishi Electric Halle, Neal S. Blaisdell Center, Adrienne Arsh Center and Shanghai Symphony Hall.

Matsumoto is actively involved in charitable work such as performing as a featured soloist for Music for a Sustainable Planet, helping to create awareness of global climate issues presented by the United Nations at Carnegie Hall, and has performed as a guest soloist with the Shanghai Philharmonic Orchestra as a Foreign Friendship Ambassador to premiere Chinese composer Peng-Peng Gong’s historical Rejuvenation Symphony (a one hundred-minute Symphony written for Matsumoto).

Matsumoto has made an appearance with Skrillex and Chance the Rapper on CBS’s The Late Show with Stephen Colbert and was invited to be a guest of honor two years in a row at Anime Expo alongside legendary rock band KISS. Matsumoto is also a member of symphonic rock band Critical Hit which tours the U.S. and Europe. Matsumoto is
HILA PLITMANN (soprano)
A glittering jewel on the international music scene, Grammy® Award-winning soprano Hila Plitmann is known worldwide for her astonishing musicianship, light and beautiful voice, and the ability to perform challenging new works. She regularly premieres works by today’s leading composers while maintaining a vibrant and extraordinarily diverse professional life in film music, musical theatre, and song writing. Described as a performer with “tremendous vocal and physical grace,” and “a vocal instrument that is simply unreal in its beauty,” Plitmann is in constant demand as a singer of new and contemporary music. She has worked with many leading conductors and has appeared as a headliner with the New York Philharmonic, the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the London Symphony Orchestra, the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, the Minnesota Orchestra, the National Symphony Orchestra, the Israel Philharmonic, the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, the Nashville Symphony Orchestra and numerous other orchestras and ensembles worldwide.

DAT NGUYEN (guitar)
Dat Nguyen is a guitarist, singer, songwriter, producer and international performer. He was born in 1970 in Vietnam, blind from birth and orphaned at the age of 5. He began his music studies at age 11, playing drums, and became interested in classical music a few years later. In 1989, at the age of 18, he was introduced for the first time to the recordings of famed Spanish guitarist Andres Segovia, and an immediate enchantment with the guitar and its music led him to decide to devote his life to studying and performing on the classical guitar.

Nguyen and his younger sister came to the United States in 1991 under the auspices of the U.S. government Orderly Departure Program (ODP) to relocate Amerasians, since Dat’s foster father was an American serviceman. For the next two and a half years, Nguyen had little opportunity for formal study of the guitar. In 1993, still in high school, he was a prize-winning guitarist in the Disney Creativity Challenge. Later that year, he enrolled as a guitar performance major at California State University, Fullerton, under the direction of professor David Grimes, and graduated in 1999.

Nguyen has won many prizes and awards in music competitions and has built for himself a large fan base in North America, Europe, Asia and Australia. In 2007, he performed with Stevie Wonder while with the rock band Bayadera. Nguyen now travels the world sharing his music and incredible talent.

“He’s an astonishing musician,” says David Grimes. “It’s his attitude and experiences that really sets him apart. He has a constant excitement about the music. He loves to perform. This is his way of communicating to the world.”

BELINDA GONZALEZ (soprano)
Tam-Dan Belinda Gonzalez is a first generation Vietnamese-American from Southern California. As a child of two cultures, Belinda strives to combine her Vietnamese heritage with her love of classical music to create unique experiences with her audience. She is a classically trained soprano with performing experiences varying in genres including opera, choral music, musical theater, jazz, and pop. She received a bachelor of music degree with an emphasis in vocal performance from California State University, Fullerton. Her attendance at California State University, Fullerton provided her with opportunities to master her craft under the direction of professor Linda Leyrer and gave her many performance opportunities including several opera and choral productions. Belinda was featured as the soprano soloist in Gabriel Fauré’s Requiem on the University Orchestra and Choir’s tour of Paris. She is continuing her education and pursuing her master of music degree in opera performance at the Bob Cole Conservatory of Music at California State University, Long Beach where she is studying with Ms. Shigemi Matsumoto. She is currently a member of the music ministry team at St. Ireneaus Catholic Church in Cypress as a cantor and assists in directing the youth choir. Belinda hopes to share her passion for classical voice with her community through performance and desires to inspire and guide young singers in their exploration of musical artistry as a voice teacher.

DANAE VLASSE (composer)
Danaé Xanthe Vlasse is the director of Music Vision Studios, where she teaches piano, theory and composition. She is an MTNA nationally certified teacher with a degree in piano performance and over 15 years of teaching experience. As a composer she has contributed to the film industry, and her work as been featured on international radio broadcasts. She is a recipient of the Clouzine International Music Awards, Radio Music Awards, multi-recipient of the Global Music Awards, and the Prestige Music Awards, as well as a multiple-winner of the MTAC “Composers Today” advanced division, multiple-winner of the Indie Music Channel Awards, nominated at the Producer’s Choice...
Awards, the Independent Music Awards, and multi-nominated at the Hollywood Music in Media Awards. Furthermore, she is active in collaborations with other composers from all over the world; she has worked with composers and musicians living all over Europe, the Middle-East and India.

Vlasse’s native France is a clear influence in her harmonic language and melodic ideas, while her Greek heritage guides her classical approach to structure with balanced structural form and carefully measured phrases.

Vlasse is presently associated with eight albums including three albums featuring exclusively her own compositions; Solstice (2018), Trilogies (2017), and Celebrations and Commemoration (2015). In 2019 she will release an album of her art songs with pianist Robert Thies and sopranos Hila Plitmann and Sangeeta Kuar.

**DUY TRAN (asst. production manager)**

Born and raised in Vietnam, Duy Tran began his early music knowledge with the classical piano and he eventually combined his love for music with his love of film to compose various projects in contemporary genres.

For visual media, Duy has created music for clients such as Sony, Samsung, Tetra Pak, PNJ Jewelry, and Lam Gia Khang Fashion. For film, his music has been showcased at quite a few film festivals, including Rwanda Film Festival, The Naples International Film Festival, and the HollyShorts Film Festival, where he scored the entirety of short film, *Tyson!* In 2017, he was also the recipient of the “Best Music and Sound” award of The 48-Hour Film Project 2017.

For concerts, Duy is a music director for MPU School of Music (Saigon, Vietnam). In addition, he takes part in philanthropic work, as an orchestrator and co-producer for “Giac Mo Dem Mua Dong” (“Christmas Dream”), a choral charity concert for children with HIV and leukemia.

Duy received his bachelor of music in composition at Musicians Institute, and master of music in screen scoring at USC.
On her third album, *Mirrors*, Vietnamese American award-winning New Age/Classical Crossover opera singer, mantra singer, songwriter and producer Sangeeta Kaur continues her journey of courageously expanding the boundaries of sacred sound and song, forging new pathways for the modern New Age genre family.

Leading with raw delicate intimacy on these eight new recordings, *Mirrors* makes for an empowering playlist and meditation on the power of vulnerability. The result and reward for the listener is restorative re-alignment of heart, soul and spirit.

Breaking with the traditional paradigms of her previous two albums, (*The Mantra Project* classics *Niguma Vol. 1* and *Ascension Niguma Vol. 2*), Sangeeta on her new collection was inspired to let her words, hypnotic melodies and the band’s freedom of improvisation be her guide and dictate the strategy of production. Reuniting with her trusted collaborators, producer/songwriter/renowned film composer Nicolas Neidhardt, Grooveworx engineer Gerhard Joost and her long-time friend and multi-instrumentalist/classical guitar expert Dat Nguyen, Sangeeta wrote the album’s lyrics and melodies, which gave greater clarity to inform the direction of the music that the trio then composed.

Recorded in Hollywood at the historical East West Studios (loved by Frank Sinatra, The Beach Boys and Elton John), Sangeeta favored an alliance of discipline and simplicity in the stripped-down approach for the writing and production of the new material with only guitar, piano and vocals.

“In the recording process I was super intimate and super exposed in my goal to be as relatable as possible to the listener, while not abandoning my traditional classical roots and discipline which must be a part of anything I do as an artist. I wanted the challenge and I loved it.”

Highlights on the collection include “I’m Not Gonna Break,” “If Time Stood Still,” and a cover of the world-famous classic rock essential “Dust In The Wind” with her love of sacred mantra selectively “sprinkled in” throughout the album.

On the significance of the album’s title, Sangeeta shares: “There is great personal empowerment and liberation when we allow ourselves to truly be seen. It takes courage and it takes faith. I want these songs to help inspire the journey that redefines the concept of reflection and how we see ourselves. Music MIRRORS.”